A Message from the Dean – James H. McKerrow, PhD, MD

I am enjoying seeing our school grow and mature as we embark on a new year. In recognition of our efforts in community outreach and entrepreneurship, SSPPS was awarded $150,000 from the University of California Office of the President under Assembly Bill 2664. Some of this money goes to support the innovative educational program, California Shaman, designed by SSPPS faculty member Dr. Dio Siegel. This program brings together expertise from our school as well as San Diego State and Cuyamaca College to educate and excite San Diego County high school students in both native plant identification and modern methods of natural product isolation and characterization for potential drug therapy. The remaining money will help to support another initiative: The UC San Diego Drug Development Pipeline, a series of translational drug development steps overseen by SSPPS faculty member, Dr. Jeremiah Momper. The launch of the Drug Development Pipeline now completes a unique University program to identify drug targets, carry out high throughput screening of potential small molecule or natural products against those targets, and then translate chemical hits into safe and effective drugs.

A collaborative program between SSPPS and the Scripps Institute of Oceanography was awarded matching funds from our Chancellor and will soon launch. Initial grants came from the ALSAM Foundation and the Acacia Fund and will support acquisition of a unique collection of marine natural products from ten laboratories in the US and Canada to now be screened for drugs to treat neglected tropical diseases. SSPPS faculty member, Dr. William Gerwick, and SIO Director, Dr. Margaret Leinen, were valued partners in this endeavor.

We are also expanding our commitment to the education of a new generation of pharmacy students dedicated to pharmaceutical science research. Three Masters of Science programs are completing the approval process required by the University of California. The first of these is Drug Product Development and will include key elements of the FDA regulatory process and commercialization. The second in Health Informatics will educate a cadre of students in the analysis of data from a variety of sources connected to the concept of personalized medicine. The third program is developing a curriculum in Pharmacogenomics. These Masters programs come on the heels of the soon to be launched focus area in Pharmaceutical Sciences within the Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program.

We continue to build bridges not only across the UC San Diego campus but to local institutes and companies as well. We will soon designate our second Post Sophomore Fellow, a one year research internship supported by Janssen Pharmaceuticals. Finally the growth of our school and its alumni base is now recognized by the formation of an Alumni Relations Committee headed by former SSPPS student, Dr. Jason Lam.
SSPPS News

SSPPS Delegates Visiting Taiwan

By Grace M. Kuo, PharmD, PhD, MPH, FCCP

In October, 2016, a group of UC San Diego SSPPS delegates, including Drs. Jim McKerrow, Jennifer Le, Felix Yam, Jeremiah Momper, and Grace Kuo, visited two colleges of pharmacy and their affiliated hospitals in Taiwan. We look forward to continual international collaborations with China Medical University (CMU) in Taichung and Taipei Medical University (TMU) in Taipei.

Meeting with CMU Chancellor (Dr. Wen-Hwa Lee), Dean of College of Pharmacy (Dr. Wen-Chuan Lin), Dean of Global Affairs (Dr. Liang-Yo Yang), and faculty

Meeting with CMU Dean, Faculty, and students (who had trained at UC San Diego SSPPS)

Presentation and meeting with pharmacists and students at Taichung VA Hospital

Meeting with TMU Dean of College of Pharmacy (Dr. Jackson Wu) and faculty
SSPPS Acetylcholinesterase scheduled to fly to space in April 2017

By Zoran Radić, PhD

Expressed and purified by Mrs. Joannie Kwok-Yiu Ho, Research Associate in Dr. Zoran Radić’s laboratory at SSPPS, samples of highly purified recombinant human acetylcholinesterase are being prepared for microgravity crystallization trials aboard the International Space Station. It is expected that in microgravity the enzyme will form crystals suitable for neutron diffraction data collection to be performed post-flight, at the Oak...
Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee in order to reveal spatial positions of protons critical for acetylcholinesterase catalytic mechanism. Up to 1 mm³ large crystals may be required for successful neutron diffraction data collection. This project is part of the NIH NINDS U01 grant led by Dr. Zoran Radić, in collaboration with consortium PIs, Dr. Andrey Kovalevsky of the ORNL and Dr. Donald Blumenthal of the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT. The crystallization setup is overseen by Dr. Kovalevsky within agreement competitively awarded by CASIS, a NASA agency in charge of administering experiments aboard the ISS. The value of CASIS provided services under this agreement is in the order of $3 million. The program is currently in the “pre-flight simulation” stage, mandated by NASA and initiated in early October of 2016 when Drs. Kovalevsky and Radić prepared “ground control” crystallization trays in the CASIS laboratory at Cape Canaveral, FL. The enzyme samples will be loaded to the Space-X supply ship SpX-11 scheduled to launch on April 9, 2017 from the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral. The plan is to recover crystals about six months later, at the Vandenberg AFB, SpaceX collection site in California.

**Partners in Medication Therapy (PMT)**

By Jan D. Hirsch, BSPharm, 3PhD

The first week of the winter break was a busy one at the SSPPS Simulation Lab. The SSPPS Partners in Medication Therapy (PMT) group conducted a week-long "pop-up" Medication Therapy Management (MTM) call center for Community Health Group Medicare Part D patients. Brainchild of Dr. Sarah Lorentz, Director of Medication Therapy Management, the call center was a great success for patients, students and faculty alike.

A total of 14 students participated along with seven faculty preceptors and four pharmacy resident preceptors. The students worked up 48 complex patients, and conducted 27 Comprehensive Medication Reviews (CMRs) with patients on the phone. A total of 285 Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experience (IPPE) hours were earned by students during the call center week.
Some student reflections:

“… allowed me to look at the patient as a whole and comprehensively.”

“… great experience communicating and interacting with patients, it was also valuable to practice with real-life patient cases.”

“… good practice learning to evaluate drug-drug interactions (DDIs), drug-disease interactions, and to prioritize main problems.”

Thanks to all who made this possible – we helped a lot of patients!


**Clinical Faculty**: Christina Mnatzaganian, Jason Lam, Nathan Painter, Joe Ma, Kelly Lee, Brookie Best, Pawny Kelly and to the many more who stopped by for moral support! And to those who kindly provided their therapeutics lecture slides for students to review in advance – this really helped – thanks Linda Awdishu, Kelly Lee, Felix Yam, and FJ.

**Residents**: Julie Savelloni, Ronnie Delmonte, Marlina Mansour, and Jairus Mahoe.
Faculty News

Ten years of stereoscopic 3D presentations at international scientific meetings

By Zoran Radić, PhD

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the first stereoscopic 3D session on macromolecular structure/activity relationships organized by Dr. Zoran Radić of SSPPS at the International Meeting on Cholinesterases in Suzhou, China in 2007. Since then Dr. Radić has organized five international scientific 3D sessions and presented stereoscopic lectures at more than ten international meetings and institutions, including Russia, Croatia, Spain, France and the United States. The presentation technology, based on either “active,” “quad-buffered” or “anaglyph” stereoscopic 3D, Dr. Radić developed into a single person portable set-up with aim of facilitating experimentally correct perception of biologically active macromolecules. Advanced macromolecular visualization approaches have an added value in education on molecular basis of drug/target interactions and are being used in his classes at UC San Diego.

Congratulations

Anthony O'Donoghue, PhD and Ila Saunders, PharmD were accepted to the NCLAM Program beginning January 2017.

Grace Kuo, PharmD, MPH, PhD was elected to Distinguished Fellowship in the National Academies of Practice (NAP) and the Pharmacy Academy as a Distinguished Practitioner and Fellow.

Nathan A. Painter, PharmD was elected Treasurer with the American Association of Diabetes Education for 2017.
Croatian Society of Natural Sciences honors Dr. Zoran Radić with Spiridion Brusina Medal

By Zoran Radić, PhD

The eighteenth traditional Spiridion Brusina Medal, presented annually to researchers in the field of natural sciences for contributions to international promotion of Croatian science and deserving of fostering collaborations with Croatian scientific institutions, was for the year 2016 awarded to Dr. Zoran Radić, Associate Adjunct Professor of the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences at UC San Diego. Dr. Radić, who also holds Research Advisor position at the University of Zagreb, has led several NIH funded joint projects with Croatian colleagues and maintains research collaborations sponsored by Croatian Ministry of Science. Past recipients of the award were, among others, affiliates of the Institute Jacques Monod, Paris, France; McGill University, Montreal, Canada; Boston University, USA; Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany; Mayo Clinic, Rochester, USA; Descartes University, Paris, France; Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany; and ETH, Zurich, Switzerland. The medal bears the name of the 19th century Croatian malacologist and Charles Darwin’s contemporary, Spiridion Brusina, credited for seminal contributions to development of science in Croatia and for co-founding the Croatian Society of Natural Sciences in 1885.

Student News

3rd Annual AMCP Student Pharmacist Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Local Competition

By Hannah Nguyen, P3

On a Saturday morning in mid-January, a group of highly motivated students prepared themselves for the 3rd Annual AMCP Student Pharmacist Pharmacy and Therapeutics (P&T) Local Competition. The case for this year’s competition focuses on the formulary management of the oral JAK inhibitor, Tofacitinib (Xeljanz®), for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis (RA). Working in a team of four, participants reviewed clinical safety and efficacy data, along with cost-effectiveness data, to compare Tofacitinib to other currently available RA treatment options. The competition requires that students accurately evaluate and assess clinical trials and
formulate their own recommendation based upon their understanding. Students are required to write a 20-page monograph, evaluate the manufacturer's eDossier, and present their formulary recommendations on the day of the competition. This year, we had three very impressive teams competing in the local competition. All three teams showed in-depth critical and analytical thinking skills. The quality of their written materials, as well as their presentations, is highly commendable. Congratulations to all participants for finishing the competition!
The winners of the 3rd Annual Local Student Pharmacist P&T Competition are Vanessa On (P2), Kathy Nguyen (P2), Jincheng Yang (P3), and Anh Ta (P2). Congratulations! These students will submit their materials to AMCP for consideration as one of eight finalist teams for the 17th Annual National AMCP Student Pharmacist P&T Competition to be held in March in Denver, CO. Good luck team! Ever since the establishment of the AMCP-UC San Diego Student Chapter, UC San Diego SSPPS has continuously placed among the top eight schools in the national competition – winning first place in 2016. We are now sending, again, our brightest and best team to the national competition with hopes of defending the championship.

In addition, we would like to thank Dr. Jan D. Hirsch, Dr. Charles Daniels, and Dr. Stephen Jung for serving as judges in the local competition and Dr. Jonathan H. Watanabe and Dr. Sara Erickson for serving as advisors for the AMCP-UC San Diego Student Chapter.

If anyone is interested in the competition or has questions, please contact Hannah Nguyen (hkn002@UC San Diego.edu).

What’s going on in Pharmacy Practice?

By Adrienne Gomez & Teah Stacks

We just wrapped up one of Winter Quarter's biggest topics – Diabetes Care Lectures & Workshop. This year Pharmacy Practice executed a new way of training our first year pharmacy students in diabetes care. In past years, workshops were held in a lecture setting. This year students were in a more one-on-one setting with faculty and conference leaders where they discussed various products and devices. Eight stations with groups of seven students had between 12-15 minutes with a facilitator.

Topics included:

**Insulin injection Site**: The student pharmacists need to properly educate patients on the correct way to inject insulin. To simulate the injection site, lipohypertrophy pads were used to mock human.

**Insulin vial and syringe**: As a refresher from the Immunization course in the Fall, students were reintroduced on how to properly fill syringes with medication.

**Insulin pens**: Different forms of insulin pens are available to patients who suffer from diabetes. Pens include Rapid-acting, Short-acting, Intermediate-acting, Long-acting and Pre-mixed pens. Students were shown the differences and how to properly use them.

**Glucose meters**: As part of a one-week assignment the students took home and kept a
glucometer. They were required to monitor and record their results daily.

**Hypoglycemia:** In the event a patient experiences hypoglycemia, the students were instructed on the proper way to help with different food options.

**Log book interpretation:** As a diabetes patient, one should keep a log of their daily food intake, daily glucose reading and also include their daily activity.

**CHO counting:** Proper nutrition and portion control is key for a person with diabetes. Each student had to create a healthy plate for themselves using the food models.

**Insulin pharmacokinetic cases:** A case was presented to each group. The students then had to collaborate to come up with the correct insulin regimen graph.

Faculty, conference leaders and the students truly enjoyed the more intimate and very hands on experience. A big thank you to the companies who donated products for the workshops.

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**CSHP-UC San Diego Receives CSHP Community Service Award in Tobacco Cessation and ASHP Outstanding Professional Development Award for Asthma Education in Ensenada, Mexico**

**By Rachelle Roxas, P3**

In September 2016, CSHP-UC San Diego was selected among all California schools to receive the California Society of Health-System Pharmacy’s (CSHP’s) Community Service Award in Tobacco Cessation. Congratulations are in order for last year’s Tobacco Cessation Chair, Lily Yu, immediate past-President, Jenny Han, the entire Tobacco Cessation Clinic (TCC) team, and TCC preceptors for their dedication to patient care. Jenny accepted this award on behalf of our chapter at the CSHP Seminar Awards Ceremony on October 29, 2016.

On the national level, the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists (ASHP) recognized our chapter with the ASHP Outstanding Professional Development Project Award for last year’s newly installed humanitarian missions focusing on Asthma Education in Ensenada, Mexico. Congratulations are in order for our past and present Humanitarian Mission volunteers and project coordinators, as well as our preceptor, Professor Panteha Kelly. This past year was the first of many humanitarian missions organized by CSHP-UC San Diego in collaboration with local undergraduate organizations, Flying Samaritans and Healing Hearts Across Borders. Implementation of culturally sensitive asthma education and medication counseling truly creates a positive impact for our patients. Special thanks for the support from the American Lung Association and pharmacist volunteer/Spanish translator, Dr. Pablina
Jones. We were recognized with a blue ribbon at the ASHP Midyear Student Society Showcase on December 4, 2016. Pictured is immediate past-President, Jenny Han, accepting the blue ribbon and presenting a poster at the Showcase that features our chapter’s annual San Diego Smoke Out.

Many thanks to CSHP-UC San Diego faculty advisors for your continual support and guidance, as well as CSHP-UC San Diego members and board members whose participation and leadership make this chapter so strong.

Diabetes and Hypertension Health Fair at Poway SFSD for the Sikh Population

By Manreet Sivia, P3, Arjun Vijan, P3, Khushwinder Gill, P4, and Renu Singh, PharmD

UC San Diego Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences students held the 3rd annual Sikh Foundation San Diego (SFSD) health fair event in Poway on Sunday, October 2nd, 2016. Student pharmacists, Manreet Sivia, Khushwinder Gill, and Arjun Vijan screened a total of 45 adult patients, with an average patient age of 53 years old. There was a wide patient age range, with the youngest patient at 33 years old and the eldest at 86 years old. Patients were offered advice about their overall health and they were screened for blood glucose (BG) and blood pressure (BP) readings. A majority of the people who obtained a health screen at the event spoke Punjabi, a native language from the state of Punjab, India. The three student pharmacists speak fluent Punjabi, so they were able to use their language skills to converse with the patients for the screenings. In addition, educational pamphlets that Khushwinder Gill previously created in both English and Punjabi, were distributed to the patients. These pamphlets highlighted tips on the Indian diet, specifically on how to cut down on poor carbohydrate choices, fats, and sodium intake. It featured pictures with typical Indian meals with recommended portion sizes for carbohydrates, protein and vegetables, which made it much easier for patients to understand and apply to their own diets. The pamphlets also included tables showing normal and high values for BP and BG. After each patient was screened, the student pharmacists wrote his or her results in the pamphlet and explained what the results meant. The student pharmacists also reviewed the pamphlet content with each patient individually to ensure that he or she understood it. Healthy lifestyle interventions were also explained, such as reducing salt and fatty food intake, increasing physical activity, and the importance of weight loss in overweight or obese patients. Out of the 45 patients who were screened, five patients were in the hypertension category (BP >140/90 mm Hg), and were advised to follow up with their primary care physician (PCP). One patient, who did not have a diagnosis of diabetes, had a high BG reading, and two patients had a BG level <80 mg/dL. These patients were also advised to see their PCP. All patients currently taking antihypertensive agents or diabetes medications had BP and/or BG levels within the goal range, respectively.
For patients with pre-existing diabetes and/or hypertension, the event was an opportunity to remind them about the importance of medication adherence, healthy lifestyle choices, and self-monitoring at home. The student pharmacists advised many patients about not skipping doses, keeping a regular dosing schedule, and to always consult their physician before discontinuing any medications. Patients expressed sincere gratitude to the student pharmacists and to Dr. Singh for providing free health care and advice in both Punjabi and English. We thank Dr. Singh for providing the refresher training and preceptorship for the health event, Manreet Sivia for organizing the event, Khushwinder Gill for providing guidance (the previous organizer of the event), Arjun Vijan for assisting with glucose screenings, and SFSD for providing funding for purchase of the glucose test-strips. We would also like to thank Pharmacy Practice course assistant, Teah Stacks, for the loan of blood pressure and glucose screening equipment.

Academy ofManaged Care Pharmacy (AMCP) – UC San Diego Student Members and Faculty Advisors Represent UC San Diego at AMCP Nexus Conference 2016

By Cydnee Ng, P2

Several AMCP-UC San Diego members and chapter faculty advisors, Dr. Jonathan Watanabe and Dr. Sara Erickson, attended the AMCP Nexus conference at the Gaylord National Hotel & Convention Center October 3 – 6, 2016 in National Harbor, Maryland. This national conference attracted hundreds of managed care pharmacists and other health care professionals devoted to managed care, specialty pharmacy, and population-based health services research.

There are three students successfully shared their research findings at the conference’s poster session. Kathy Nguyen, P2, concluded sleep medication use was associated with increased fall worries and, consequently, daily activity limitations in her poster, “Sleep Medication Use and Fall Worry and Worry-Related Limitations in U.S. Older Adults.” Jamie Ta, P3, presented on “Comparative Adherence and Outcomes with Addition of GLP-1 Receptor Agonists, SGLT2 Inhibitors, or DPP-IV Inhibitors for the Treatment of Type 2 Diabetes in a Managed Care Plan.” She reported that there were
statistically significant class-level differences in patient adherence during a 1-year period among these anti-diabetic drugs, the highest of which was SGLT2 inhibitors. In Jonathan Chiang’s, P4, poster presentation, “Value Analysis of a Clinical Pharmacy Service for Direct Oral Anticoagulant Therapy Management,” he discussed that MTM services accompanying direct oral anticoagulant (DOAC) use reduced the rate of DOAC-related complications and improved adherence.

Dr. Watanabe also presented his abstract, “Correlation of Pain and Pain Medication Use with Insomnia in the Nationally Representative National Health and Aging Trends Study Database.” He concluded that pain, associated limitations, and use of pain medications were associated with insomnia in older adults in the U.S. In addition, Dr. Erickson, along with her MedImpact colleague, Dr. Susan Trieu, led an insightful educational session, “NASH – Clinical Pipeline and Budget Impact Analysis.” This session covered the growing prevalence of NASH, or nonalcoholic steatohepatitis, a form of fatty liver disease, current drugs under development, and treatment cost models to avoid high costs.

During the General Session at Nexus, UC San Diego was recognized for taking first place in the 2016 AMCP Foundation Pharmacy & Therapeutics Competition. Award recipients included Joanne Chiu, P4; Jeffrey He, P4; Hannah Nguyen, P3; and Jamie Ta, P3. They placed first among eight finalist teams from top pharmacy schools across the country. Jamie Ta was also recognized for completing the highly competitive and prestigious 2016 AMCP/Pfizer summer internship.

Congratulations to all on their hard work, dedication, and accomplishments!

**Summer Research Training Program Poster Presentation**

January 19th was another successful Summer Student Research Poster Presentation. Twenty-nine SSPPS students participated in this event held at the Medical Education & Telemedicine Building with School of Medicine students.
History and Goals of the Serotones

By Cara Eskelsen, P2 and Josh Valdez, P3

Serotones is a music organization founded in 2015 with the goal of using music to provide relief to patients and families suffering from anxiety, depression, and pain. In addition to the musical aspect of the organization, Serotones has interests in philanthropy and helping the community.

Over the summer of 2016, Serotones volunteered at St. Madeleine Sophie's Center for Adults with Developmental Disabilities (SMSC). SMSC is an organization based in El Cajon that serves individuals with developmental disabilities through nationally recognized innovative programs. SMSC’s mission is to educate and empower individuals with developmental disabilities to realize their full potential. We were contacted by them initially for music and performance services, and have been performing there monthly as a service to the adults at SMSC.

However, Serotones decided that in addition to music performances, they would also like to offer health education to adults at SMSC. Serotones expressed interest in expanding collaboration with SMSC because their organization works with a population that, to our knowledge, had not been addressed at UC San Diego SSPPS. Aligning with the UC San Diego SSPPS philosophy of interdisciplinary relationships and collaboration, Serotones contacted SMSC, which aided Serotones in contacting the University of San Diego’s Hahn School of Nursing and Health Sciences. The USD nursing students informed the Serotones that they host an annual health fair at SMSC, and were eager to work alongside pharmacy students. After months of planning, a joint health fair at SMSC was arranged in early December of 2016.

The goal of this health fair was to empower the adults at SMSC with the notion that they do have the power to take charge of their own health, and that they can also make their own, independent decisions. Many of the adults require the assistance of a caregiver to varying degrees, so the idea of empowerment is very important and this was something the Serotones wanted to stress. Serotones hosted a pharmacy booth to supplement the nursing student presentations. At the booth, we held a lip balm compounding activity and also a sugar visual activity that compared the different amounts of sugars in various drinks. Serotones selected the lip balm compounding activity because it most closely related to SMSC’s goals of education and empowerment. This activity allowed the adults to experience pride from making their own lip balm, which they could give as a gift to a parent or caregiver or use themselves, since many of the adults said they have dry skin. In the sugary drinks visual activity, bags containing sugar were used to visualize the sugar content in drinks such as lemonade, orange juice, soda, and water. These bags were given to the adults to match with the drinks they thought had the corresponding amount of sugar. Many of the adults were shocked to discover how much sugar these drinks contained compared to water. The impact of this visual activity hopefully encouraged them to make wiser choices about what they drink in the future.

This health fair was a great experience in collaboration, and the camaraderie between the nursing students, pharmacy students, caregivers, staff, and the adults at SMSC could be felt throughout the whole event. All the volunteers had a wonderful time, and we look forward to continuing this event, and making it even bigger next year!
UC San Diego Student-Run Free Clinic’s Tobacco Cessation/Medication Management Clinic

By Althea Han, P3

Tobacco Cessation/Medication Management Clinic (TCMMC) is one of the many learning opportunities available to student pharmacists at the UC San Diego Student-Run Free Clinic. In 2012, Dr. Tim Chen was approached by fellow Alumni Drs. Rebecca Kandilian and Andrea Bechtold regarding initiating a tobacco cessation program/medication management program at the PB free clinic, meeting a need at the clinics. Since the initiation in January 2012, PB free clinic has had consistent TCC/Med Mgt programs weekly for the last several years and in 2015, the downtown site was initiated with Dr. Michelle Hughes with the assistance of Dr. Chen and Dr. Eduardo Fricovsky.

Under the guidance of preceptors Dr. Hughes and Dr. Chen, the clinics are supported by two teams of P3s dedicated to providing tobacco cessation counseling and medication management services for patients at the Downtown and Pacific Beach locations every Monday and Wednesday, respectively. Since initiation of TCMMC, the UC San Diego-CSHP student chapter has received four consecutive Community Practice Awards for Tobacco Cessation from 2012 to 2016!

From my personal experience, TCMMC has been a great opportunity to apply pharmacology and therapeutics knowledge learned in the classroom on real life patients. Some invaluable learning experiences that I have gained through the program include how to write up a SOAP note, apply motivational interviewing, and present on discussion topics. It goes without saying that the student-run free clinic is full of learning opportunities that every student pharmacist should take advantage of!

Our program would like to take this opportunity to thank the following:

1. All the team members over the years for their dedication.
2. Dr. Chen for assisting in starting and maintaining the programs as well as training new preceptors to oversee the programs.
3. Dr. Hughes for managing the Downtown program.
4. Dr. Fricovsky for his ongoing support of the program.

As the year winds down, the TCCMC will be accepting applications. If you are interested and want more information regarding the application process, please contact Althea Han (xyhan@UC San Diego.edu) and Dr. Chen (tic072@UC San Diego.edu).

In February, the Office of Experiential Education held the 9th APPE Annual Rotation Fair. The Rotation Fair provides our P3s with early information regarding Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience rotation opportunities for their fourth year. The students come to this event prepared with basic knowledge and questions about the APPEs. We welcomed back many San Diego County hospitals and community pharmacies to this year's event. Two new sites were represented: MedWatchers and Gelson's Pharmacy. We were happy they could come to let our students know about the rotation opportunities at their sites. Thank you to all who attended.
Serotones Charity Concert

By Tiffany Cheng, P3 and Warren Yau, P3

Serotones, a student-run music organization at UC San Diego SSPPS, hosted their second annual charity concert on January 12th. The members of Serotones have dedicated their time over the past year to performing for cancer patients and adults with developmental disabilities. Last year, we raised money to benefit the Patient Support Services at Moores Cancer Center. This year, we dedicated our charity concert to benefit adults with developmental disabilities at St. Madeleine Sophie’s Center.

The night began with an opening act by the Serotones, followed by White Coat Noise, an instrumental group from the UC San Diego School of Medicine who returned this year to perform with us. We were also joined by fellow classmates and guest performers from around San Diego including Andrew Basilio on piano and a hip hop group known as “Left in Company”. The two hour long concert showcased a variety of music, ranging from classical to hip hop and alternative rock/metal. The concert was a great success, thanks to the many talented musicians who joined us on stage and the support of our faculty, classmates and friends from the School of Medicine.

We hope to continue on the tradition of hosting charity concerts annually in the years to come!

Performers: Warren Yau (P3), Tiffany Cheng (P3), Josh Valdez (P3), Wilson Liang (P3), Mandy Leung (P3), Cara Eskelsen (P2), Liu Liu (P3), Erin Lee (P3), Jeremy Lai (P3), Steven Mouwad (P1), Catherine Shir (M2), Micah Fry (M2), Chagil Guiab, Kenneth Jamieson, Brian McClure, Joe Alston and Andrew Basilio.

Alumni News

By Denise Harano, Class of 2014

After graduating from Skaggs, I moved to Chicago for my PGY-1 residency at the VA Jesse Brown Medical Center. My program focused heavily on ambulatory care and precepting students from the University of Illinois. I survived a snowy winter and got around with just public transportation for a whole year! Chicago was a fun and festive city, but I knew I wanted to move back home to the Bay Area afterwards. I got licensed in California since you can work at a VA hospital regardless of which state you’re licensed in. By the end of residency, I knew I liked ambulatory care, but also wanted to give inpatient a chance so I could learn more. My first job was in an inpatient position at VA Palo Alto. I was the evening medicine pharmacist and mostly...
verified inpatient orders and discharged counseled patients after hours. I realized after a year that I enjoyed counseling patients and managing chronic disease states more than acute conditions.

Now I’m a regional ambulatory care pharmacist at Kaiser working in Medication Therapy Management (MTM). Our department is unique in that we are a virtual team who contacts patients all over Northern California via telephone. My main role is doing complete medication reviews for our Medicare patients who qualify based on chronic conditions, number of medications, or annual cost of medications. Under protocol with the physician, I can add, adjust, or stop medications and order labs. I’ve only been at this job for a few months, but I’m really liking it so far. I’m lucky to have such a good work-life balance. In my free time I enjoy traveling, cooking/eating, and watching football (Go Packers!). I moved to Oakland recently so I’ve been trying out lots of nearby restaurants and San Francisco is only a 15 minute BART ride away. I’m currently working towards Yelp elite status and looking forward to a trip to the Caribbean this May!

By Trina Huynh, PharmD, BSCP, Class of 2013

Since graduating from SSPPS in 2013, I continued my career locally in San Diego. I completed my PGY1 Acute Care Residency and PGY2 Transitions of Care Residency at UC San Diego Health (UC San DiegoH). I’m originally from Los Angeles but have been drawn to the San Diego culture and the role of pharmacists within UC San DiegoH. Not surprisingly, when a position was available as an inpatient staff pharmacist, I did not hesitate.

I enjoyed my role as a staff pharmacist at the UC San DiegoH La Jolla campus where I was able to utilize clinical knowledge and skills gained during my two years of residency. Soon after, I had the opportunity to take on the role of the Transitions of Care Coordinator for the Pharmacy Department. In this new position, I work closely with our transitions of care pharmacists to facilitate safe discharges with a focus on medication management. I practice within the advanced heart failure population but also have the goal of continuing the expansion of our program. This position has allowed me to continue to care for patients who I feel passionate about and also to focus on the transitions of care program as a whole at UC San DiegoH.

Outside of work, I’ve continued my involvement with the San Diego Society of Health System Pharmacists (SDSHP), where I serve as Board Member. I also continue my involvement with SSPPS as a volunteer faculty. I distinctly remember my involvement with Pharmacy Day at SSPPS, and thus have continued my involvement by precepting the Asthma Workshop. Outside of pharmacy, I’ve been able to enjoy more and more time with friends and family. I love trying new restaurants and entertaining loved ones in our cozy home.
By Joanne Masters, PharmD, Class of 2012

Today I am a clinical pharmacologist working to develop new oncology therapies at Pfizer, Inc. in La Jolla, CA. I work as part of a clinical team of physicians, statisticians, and other scientists and professionals to design, manage, and interpret early phase clinical trial data in oncology patients in order to determine the best use and administration of the investigational drug in a specific population. Another part of my job is to build quantitative population models to first understand and then predict the pharmacokinetics, efficacy, and safety of oncology drugs in order to determine the optimal dose/dosing regimen for a particular patient - for example in the pediatric population, patients taking concomitant medications, or those with organ impairment.

As a PharmD trained in multiple disciplines within pharmacy, I find that clinical pharmacology provides the fascinating and crucial link between the science of how drugs function and the clinical impact providers ultimately observe in patients. I consider pharmacology to be a complementary ‘sister discipline’ of clinical pharmacy. After being ingrained in patient care and learning how to best utilize available therapeutics in pharmacy school, I now expand that understanding to the mechanistic and quantitative side of current and future therapies, including combinations, which are a cornerstone of oncology treatment. Through my position as a clinical pharmacologist, I bring both of these perspectives together to support the development of new drugs for various cancers. In this way, a background in pharmacy uniquely suited me for blending the essential ‘science’ of drug pharmacology and quantitative analyses with the ‘art’ of patient care and thoughtful trial design, to ultimately optimize patient outcomes while minimizing adverse events.

Upon completion of my PharmD at SSPPS, I chose a post-doctoral fellowship in clinical pharmacology, through the joint program with UC San Diego SSPPS, Pfizer Oncology, and UC San Diego Moore’s Cancer Center. Upon completion of this fellowship I was fortunate to join the Pfizer Clinical Pharmacology team as a clinical pharmacology lead working in oncology clinical trials, supporting both small and large molecule therapies. Working in this field was a dream of mine even before attending pharmacy school, and I am grateful to the many mentors at SSPPS who supported me as a student, fellow, and now a colleague in this field. The opportunity to complete the specialized joint UC San Diego-Pfizer fellowship after graduation was absolutely key to gaining the training and experience needed to succeed as a clinical pharmacologist in industry. I am still involved at SSPPS and other schools of pharmacy through advising student researchers, teaching, and mentoring. For students or alum interested in using their pharmacy background to promote clinical research, I would encourage them to explore a career in clinical pharmacology. I love my job and the diverse, exciting, challenging, and very rewarding role in which I can use my PharmD education and skills to impact patients on a global scale, both those requiring therapy today and those who will need the hope of effective cancer treatment in the future.
Staff News

Welcome to the newest SSPPS staff member, Terry Le!

Terry Le is a UC San Diego alumnus of 2007 graduating in Mathematics-Secondary Education and Human Development with a minor in History. Since 2005, he has continued to participate as a research assistant and contributor to the efforts at the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition at UC San Diego. As a student at UC San Diego, he was involved in various student organizations serving as Executive Director of the Academic Success Program and President of the Vietnamese Student Association.

He continued his education at the University of Southern California Rossier School of Education where he earned a Master's Degree in Education Psychology/Instructional Technology in 2010. After completing his master’s degree, he continued working at USC School of Pharmacy as a program coordinator for Science Technology and Research (STAR) Program helping underrepresented high school students conduct graduate level research at various laboratories at the USC Health Science Campus.

Recently, Terry was an advisor to undergraduate students and program coordinator of the graduate program in the Mathematics department. During the four years he served as advisor of the department, math majors grew from approximately 400 students to 2500 students with a graduate student population of 120 students. In addition to working with the mathematics students, he was the coordinator of the Computational Science, Mathematics, and Engineering (CSME) program for masters and doctoral students.

Outside of the university Terry has been closely involved with the Gates Millennium Scholarship Program as a volunteer for over ten years and board member of its Alumni Association from 2010 to 2014.

Besides work and school, you'll find Terry running and hiking the trails around San Diego, driving around southern California watching his favorite comedians do stand-up comedy, and seeing the same movies over and over again hoping for a different ending. He is extremely excited to join the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences family.
SSPPS Newsletter Production Calendar
(Tentative)

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